

Non-Motorized Trail Recreation in Idaho

SUMMIT SUMMARY - February 11, 2016: Boise, Idaho

Program History

Idaho's Non-Motorized Trails Program was established in 1974 by the adoption of Idaho Code 67-4233. It established a Trails Coordinator within the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation (IDPR), to advise the board and other agencies and entities on matters relating to the system, including the designation and establishment of trails.

Idaho Code 67-4234 defines the duties of the Trails Coordinator as follows: The coordinator shall advise the board on the development of the system. Trails within the system shall be designated as one (1) or more of the following: hiking, horseback riding, bicycling, snow traveling, or other non-motorized travel. (2) The coordinator, in advising the board, shall be guided by the following principles: (a) emphasis shall be placed on routes located on public lands, but not to the exclusion of private lands; (b) effort shall be made to maximize the accessibility of trails to potential users; (c) there shall be utilization of public meetings to secure citizen advice; and (d) effort shall be made to develop trails which will harmonize with other state goals, education and historical preservation. (3) The coordinator shall advise the board on necessary legislation to further the development of the system.

Access

Idaho has over 10,000 miles of non-motorized trails. Approximately two-thirds of Idaho land is managed by the US Forest Service and Federal Bureau of Management.



A Legislative Chronology

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1974 – Idaho Code 67-4233 is established.

1995 – HB 186 proposed a \$10 mountain bike user fee (failed)

1996 – Second attempt for \$10 mountain bike user fee (failed)

1998 – SB 1400 proposed \$5.50-\$21.50 horse trailer fee (failed)

1999 – Second attempt for horse trailer fee (failed)

2010 – Vanity mountain bike license plate created, \$22 annually (passed)**

2010 - Third attempt for horse trailer fee (failed)

***The Idaho Mountain Bike Plate generates approximately \$15,000 annually.*



U.S.D.A Forest Service National Backlog (FY12, Government Accounting Office Report, June, 2013)

- 158,000 total trail mileage
- Only 25% are considered to meet agency standards
- Backlog of maintenance needs estimated at \$314 million

Idaho's Non-Motorized Trails Program Budget

The annual budget for Idaho's Non-Motorized Trails Program is derived in majority from funds received annually through allocations of the state's General Fund. A portion of the Idaho Mountain Bike Plate also funds the efforts of the program. The remaining (approximately 50%) Mountain Bike Plate Funds are disseminated through a competitive grant process.

Questions to Consider:

1. How important is non-motorized trail recreation in Idaho?
2. Are there issues or concerns pertaining to non-motorized trail recreation in Idaho?
3. Is maintenance on non-motorized trails in Idaho an issue?
4. Is education important to non-motorized enthusiasts in Idaho?
5. Do you have ideas or suggestions on how to fund non-motorized trail maintenance in Idaho?
6. Are you familiar with successful funding programs in other states?

Successful Funding Examples

Small Percentage of State Lottery (Colorado)

State Gas Tax Allocation for Use of Roads by Non-Motorized Enthusiasts Headed to Trail (Washington)

Share Your Ideas

Mail: Comment forms are available at the front desk

E-mail: inquiry@idpr.idaho.gov





Summit Summary

Over 100 attendees.

Consensus that there's a lot of interest in non-motorized trail recreation and finding a long-term, sustainable funding solution for maintenance is a desire for recreationists in Idaho.

Summit Minutes

David Langhorst, IDPR Director – Welcome and introduction of the forum.

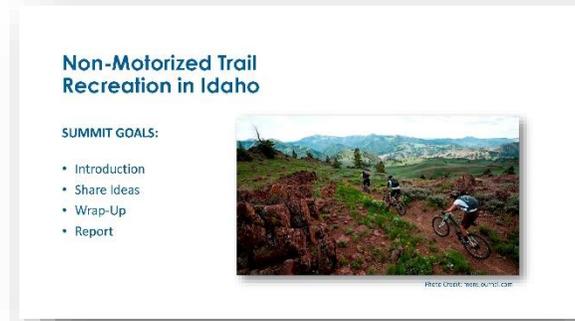
John Freemuth – Summit goals, generating ideas for funding non-motorized activities.

John May, Idaho Outfitters & Guides – Video – Idaho Public Television, Headwaters Program. Discussed the lack and need of trail maintenance, specifically for horsemen.

Grant Simons, Idaho Outfitters & Guides – A lot of collaborative efforts are going on all the time between non-profits, Outfitters & Guides, the Forest Service, and IDPR to undertake trail maintenance in Idaho and the Western States and is a huge undertaking. With all of those collaborative groups working together we are not able to get all of the trails cleared and maintained. I think we need to think outside the box.

David Claycomb, IDPR Recreation Bureau Chief – Discussed non-motorized and OHV funding. IDPR maintains roughly 1/3 of Forest Service trails or 2,000 miles of trails annually, additionally we pay 31 off-highway vehicle clubs to engage in trail maintenance. On top of that we educate approximately 1500 students annually in different types of off-highway vehicles. We give away 1 million dollars to the Forest Service, BLM or anyone else that engages in off-highway management. I can see all those things for the non-motorized community as I can for the motorized. I can see Leo having trail rangers, or paying clubs like Backcountry Horsemen to do trail maintenance in the exact same way. There are many pieces of legislation that pertain to the motorized community that the users have carried, I believe this is the only way this works.

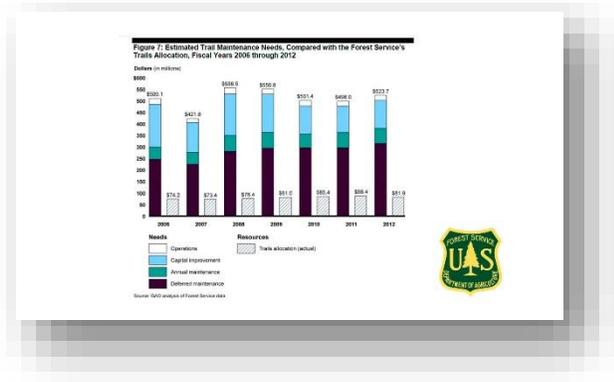
Andy Brunelle, USFS – (Graph on image next page) came from a GAO report that came out a few years ago. Titled “Short and long-term solutions to address maintenance backlog”. Maintenance verses the allocation nationally, there is a huge gap. Between 2006 and 2012 our funding rates were between \$75 million and \$85 million, in 2010 we had a little bump that was made available for trail



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work in Idaho. Our delegation in Idaho is trying to address Wild Fire funding, we have to set aside a 10 year average for wild fire costs. Each year the cost of wild fire suppression keeps going up that eats away at the rest of the core responsibilities that the FS has including trail maintenance and recreation. Over the last 12-15 years trail maintenance is down about 13%, recreation about 14%. The FS at the national level has re-evaluated how recreation related funding is distributed across the nation. It is recognized that visitor/recreation use on national forests is making a significant impact on our need to address maintenance of trails. Beginning this year national they are recalculating trails funding percentages pertaining to the distribution, north Idaho/region 1 is cut about 10% for about the next three years, there may be a little bump up in southern Idaho. About 25 – 30 % of motorized trails is getting attention, thanks to IDPR trails program. National forest land there are trails 23,200 miles of that 12,800 is motorized and 10,300 is non-motorized of that 3,700 is wilderness the other 6,600 is non-wilderness.



Harley – How many dollars per trail mile does it take to maintain motorized trails?

- **David Claycomb** – approximately \$100 - \$200 per mile, we pay clubs for light maintenance at about \$35 per mile.

Margret Fuller, Weiser – propose the Adopt a Trail System, with 1 person organizing all the volunteers.

Steve Stuebner, Boise – Dave Claycomb brings up a good point, we introduced Mountain bike legislation in the 90s, it was killed. We didn't do a good job of organizing. I know that the horseback riders tried legislation, whatever happened?

- **David Langhorst** – We know that the group came to the legislature having to do with getting registration stickers for horse trailers.

Andrew – How do off road people raise their money?

- **David Langhorst** - Through registration sticker program and federal gas tax.

Phil Ryan, Backcountry Horsemen – The registration for horse trailers didn't get very far because ranchers pushed back because they haul cattle in their horse trailers.

Rob Atlas – Proposed a sticker for non-motorized use such as parking, etc.



Howard Miller, Whitewater Association - Propose using Fish & Game system by adding a slot to your hunting license, like for waterfowl.

David Langhorst – In Washington, they proposed an exemption or re-allocation of fuel tax. One problem right now is that so many people are out for the gas tax money for roads. So the ideas we have discussed so far, here at the Summit are passes, stickers and fuel tax.

Jim Pace, McCall – Not one group, but all groups except non-motorized boats, should share a sticker. Use peer group pressure to get everyone to buy in. Could purchase when you renew your car license, like state park pass, or through retailers. Who does the trail maintenance? The idea is through clubs or teams, etc.

Leo Hennessey - Discussed how the yurt program works.

Jeff Halligan, ID Trails Association – Volunteers to do the trail maintenance, there is still a cost, to feed them, etc. Like the gas tax idea. Propose to collect a percentage of the taxes on the sale of products, such as hiking boots, tents, etc.

Robbin Schindele, Backcountry Horsemen – Propose a vehicle sticker that could go on your vehicle. If such a piece of legislation were to pass, would these funds be dedicated to only the non-motorized trails?

- **Terry Gestrin, State Legislator** – Addressed the concern about dedicated funds and explained how dedicated funding works. He also mentioned about the 15% admin fee that is collected by the department and that they don't take the entire 15%.

Wendy Harvey, District 1 Nordic Ski Club – Supports tax on sporting goods.

Betsy Hammer, Boise Trailhead – Proposed using or starting a new AmeriCorps volunteer program.

Alan Crocket – Adopt a trail program, problem is people that would adopt a trail in the wilderness are using a crosscut saw. I would like to see chainsaws allowed in the wilderness.

Alice Crocket – I have worked with the Adopt a trail program with many groups.

David Cray, REI – Peer pressure works. We need to see our funds at work.

Scott Nichols, Backcountry Horsemen – We need to use alternative labor methodology. Question for USFS – What happened to the Sawtooth demonstration project for having a pass to park at trail heads?

- **Andy Brunelle** - That pass wasn't popular at all



Scott Nichols, Backcountry Horsemen – From what I am seeing here tonight is if we are going to do anything, it needs to be all of us. I think we need to revisit the pass. Idaho Department of Lands uses prison crews, which is very effective.

Mike Anderson, TVTMA – We do trail clearing and get paid for it, we also donate the money back to the program, so we do volunteer. Excited to hear about the pass, and all the ideas being presented here.

Madonna Lengerich – Figure out how to add out of state users. She worked on the wildfires; they used crews from the prison.

Vicki, Mountain Biker – Like to look at the health benefit. Proposed going to businesses ask employees to volunteer to get the health benefits.

Grant Simons, Backcountry Horsemen – Clearwater Basin Collaborative group has endorsed this concept to incentivize to clear trails. We would like to see the outfitters to get a script against the fees that they pay to do more trail maintenance.

Tom Seifert, PLTA - In support of the voucher system. Could there be some sort of a tax credit for donations?

Charles Petrock – Just pay for use season pass for each sport, like you do for campgrounds.

Talasi Brooks, Former USFS – Caution about user fees, part of our tax dollars should be going to maintain our trail systems. Our tax dollars are not being routed to trails. This is a job for professionals, we can't depend on volunteers. We need to have somebody sit down and study this and gather more information so that we can make an informed decision and not jump to a user fee right-a-way.

Jonathan Oppenheimer, ID Conservation League – We worked on a proposal to take a portion of the gas tax for non-motorized trails. We did work with the Parks & Recreation's Board, IRC presented to a bunch of legislators, there wasn't a lot of resistance for the legislator. The problem was, the transportation bill got the attention of the legislators, so there was a lot of disinterest to take a look at the proposed legislation. Good thing about the gas tax, it is a tax that is already imbedded and everyone pays. New proposal will take a couple of years, we are looking for ideas and groups to support.

Roger Phillips – Support getting donation with potentially a match from RTP.

Wayne Fuller – Supports the gas tax. Remove the fire funding proposal. Write senators about the gas tax. Get more young people by providing amenities.

Patty Morgan, Hiker – In support of a sticker.



Tom Shultz – Question – on the annual passport success? He thinks the passes are too cheap? In support of donations.

- **David Langhorst** – Our agency has made money with Passport, although not enough to cover extensive budget cuts and increased expenses. One possible idea for the future is to reach out to the Directors of sister agencies and work collaboratively on a more expansive and inclusive Passport-like program.

Brenda Adams – Hate to pay to use public lands. Propose to adopt a hiker, you could buy a pass or license for another person or a young person. If you make the young people pay, they may not use the trails.

? – Washington State passport is 3 times what Idaho charges. On their motor vehicle license renewal there is a check box to support trails.

David Claycomb - Explains dedicated funding and how through the designation system, your money goes back on the ground. Propose that different users (hikers, bikers, etc.) use the designation system.

Dean Meer, REI – Has a concern about taxing sporting goods. Supports fair taxation on internet sales of sporting goods.

Tim Brewer – Find cornerstone for funding, using a bunch of the ideas such as proposed tonight.

Johnny Howard, Cascade – Are we looking far enough down the road? If young people aren't using public lands, we need to think ahead on any ideas.

Alan Crocket – The money for fire building, maybe it could cover resurrection of trails. Has a problem with money to maintain federal lands. His proposal is to push the feds to get on-board with the non-motorized funding.

Charles Petrock – We could price ourselves out. Supports paying to maintain non-motorized trails. What dollar amount do we need to achieve?

- **David Claycomb** – Talked about the motorbike funding and what they do with the money.

Terry Gestrin, State Legislator District 8 – Motorized users we need to come up with a solution. If you do move forward after tonight, I will help you by moving legislation forward.

David Langhorst – Summary:

- Volunteers
- Unite – Legislative Action

Non-Motorized Trail Recreation in Idaho



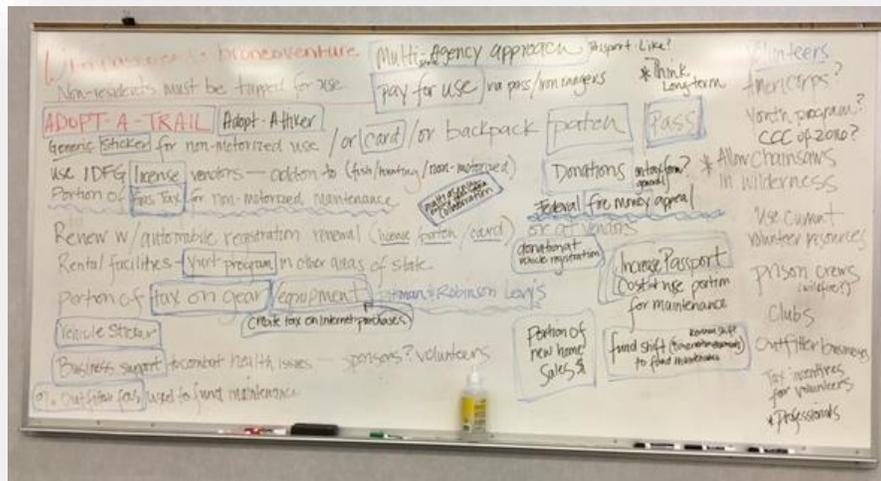
- Motorized and Non-Motorized Support
- Gestrin will carry what the non-motorized community comes up with

Final suggestions –

- Need organized leaders
- Could use labor from the alternative sentencing work crews (those convicted of drug and alcohol related crimes).

Funding

The most commonly shared funding solutions for non-motorized trail maintenance included (in no particular order):



- Adopt-a-Trail Programs
- Stickers, licenses and card programs
- Fuel Tax allocation
- Equipment/Gear Tax
- Business Support / “Round-Up” Programs
- Allocation of Tax associated with new homes sales
- Allocation of Federal Fire Funds

Next Steps

There were individuals that mentioned interest and willingness to assist with organizing efforts to bring attendees together and work towards group-led goals. (See attendee list)

Representative Gestrin agreed to carry any legislation created by the recreation community to address said goals.

Attendees

A complete list of attendees and contact information is provided in the pages following.

Non-Motorized Trail Recreation in Idaho



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